



Setting the Record Straight: “Long, hot summer of wasted chances”

Recently, the Tampa Bay Times ran a column entitled, “[Long, hot summer of wasted chances](#).” The column ignores many of the recent accomplishments and actions taken by Republicans in the Florida House and the Legislature.

Claim: “Gov. Rick Scott, House Speaker Will Weatherford and Senate President Don Gaetz won’t repeal the ‘stand your ground’ law even after the George Zimmerman trial, even after the protests and even after prosecutors say the law is flawed.”

Reality: After an official poll was taken of members to determine whether a special session to repeal Stand Your Ground would be held, a majority of legislators—including Republicans and Democrats—voted against it. Speaker Weatherford has called for a hearing on the law, which will take place in the fall.

Claim: “It also doesn’t matter to these guys that Duke Energy customers will pay more than \$3 billion for nuclear plants that are shut down or never will be built. Even after Duke pulled the plug on the proposed Levy County nuclear plant, the governor and the legislators didn’t say a word about repealing the 2006 law that lets utilities rip off ratepayers and force them to pay for phantom nuclear projects.”

Reality: The legislature passed tougher guidelines this past session to determine when energy companies can collect advanced cost recovery fees (which the Times [covered here](#)). This legislation also reduced the financing costs reflected in those fees. The cancellation of the Duke Energy plant in Levy County and a related settlement agreement negotiated by Florida’s Public Counsel and other consumer advocates are currently under review by the Public Service Commission. The House will monitor these developments and determine if additional legislation is called for during the 2014 Legislative Session.

Claim: “It also doesn’t matter to Republicans in Tallahassee that 1 million low-income Floridians won’t have health care because they won’t expand Medicaid to cover them. The federal government will cover the entire cost of that coverage for several years under the Affordable Care Act, but Scott and the gang would rather make a political point and tell Washington to keep those billions.”



Representative Steve Crisafulli, Majority Leader

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Reality: Republicans were not simply “the Party of No” on this issue. While we did reject traditional expansion and refused to commit our state to a costly, inefficient program funded by federal money that may or may not come, we also provided a fiscally responsible alternative that fit the needs of Florida. The free market plan passed by the House would have provided better healthcare options to 525,000 Floridians without being dependent on unreliable federal dollars.

Claim: “The governor and Republican lawmakers don't just oppose President Barack Obama's signature achievement. They are working against it, no matter how much it hurts Floridians.”

Reality: Recently, House Speaker Weatherford announced the creation of the Select Committee On Health Care Workforce Innovation chaired by Representative Jose Oliva (R-Miami Lakes). The committee will be focused on addressing the looming shortage of medical providers, which is expected to grow due to the implementation of ObamaCare.

Claim: “In a state where nearly 40 percent of the 19 million residents are Hispanic or African-American, the Republicans embrace policies that disproportionately hurt minorities and low-income residents.”

Reality: This statement is simply not true. This session, the Republican-led Legislature passed monumental education and empowerment reforms, including the establishment of the first public online research institute in the nation, the establishment of Scholar and Merit diploma designations to graduate and more than \$1 billion in funding for education. Additionally, the Florida Legislature has prioritized the development of a job creation economy, which we believe is better than providing more government handouts.

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